DEPICTION OF LANDSCAPE IN THE WORKS OF CHANDRA BHATTACHARJEE AND INDRAPRAMIT ROY

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DECLARATION BY THE STUDENT

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in this dissertation entitled "**Depiction of Landscape in the works of Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy**" in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Masters of Fine Arts in painting** is an authentic record of my own work carried out during the period from **February** to **April** under the supervision of **Pratap Manna** Department of **Fine Arts and Design, Sister Nivedita University.**

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Introduction

The Island to which I belong is pristine, with breath-taking scenery and natural beauty. I grew up in an area surrounded by numerous landscapes. So my art works represent issues of land and landscapes, which need me to examine natural details, changing colours of light, movement, different textures, and so on. All these help me to understand the viewpoints that exist naturally in the world. Thus they hold memories and diverse emotions, as they also reflect my childhood experiences.

Landscapes have long been a powerful medium for artists to explore human connections with nature, culture, and socio-political realities. They have played a significant role in Indian Art, depicting cultural and emotional landscapes. From Ancient cave paintings to miniature art, landscapes often appear as a backdrop to myths, ritual, and daily life.

In this dissertation, I am focusing on the works of Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy, two contemporary Indian artists known for their distinctive approach to landscape painting. Both of them are often seen as landscape artists, because their works deeply engage with nature, land and space. I chose this topic for my dissertation because their artistic explorations resonate with my own interest in landscapes as a central theme in my practice. Both the artists bring unique perspectives to landscape representation, blending personal narratives and an emotional connection to the natural world.

This dissertation is structured with four chapters, along with an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter talks about contextualizing landscape art – with a historical overview that examines the evolution of landscape from traditional to modern and contemporary Indian Art. The second one discusses about the works of Chandra Bhattacharjee, analysing his use of landscape, material approach, and key works that demonstrate his unique visual language. The third, however, focuses on the works of Indrapramit Roy, exploring his artistic journey, thematic concerns, material choices, and evolving stylistic approach in representing landscape. The fourth chapter is about a comparative analysis between the two artists' approaches to landscape, highlighting both similarities and dissimilarities.

The Expected Outcome of the dissertation aims to establish that landscapes in the works of Bhattacharjee and Roy are not only depictions of nature but profound visual narratives that address complex human experiences, socio-political realities, and ecological concerns. Besides this, the research also aims to deepen the general understanding of contemporary landscape art and also inform and inspire the evolution of my own creative process.

Chapter 1: Contextualising Landscape in Indian Painting – An Overview

Landscape art is a silent but powerful form of visual narration. It plays a critical role in shaping how we understand the connection between human emotion with nature, environment, and identity. In the Indian context, landscape art has experienced a remarkable journey, from a mere backdrop in early paintings to becoming a profound expression in contemporary art. Visual art in this country prioritized the spiritual and the figural over naturalistic representation of space. Yet, through colonial interventions, cultural revivals, and modernist transformations, Indian landscape art has evolved into a complex field of study.[1]

Figure 1: Bodhisattva Padmapani (Ajanta Cave no.1)

Ancient and Medieval Periods

In the ancient Indian tradition, landscapes did not exist as independent genres. Instead, nature appeared as a decorative, symbolic, or narrative element supporting mythological or religious themes. For instance, the frescoes in Ajanta caves illustrate forests, rivers, and gardens — but always in relation to the Jataka tales or scenes from the Buddha's life. Trees symbolize enlightenment or shelter, rivers represent transitions, and flora conveys abundance.

In miniature painting traditions of Mughal, Rajput and Pahari schools, nature became more detailed but remained secondary to human figures and divine action. Rajput and Pahari miniature paintings depict landscapes to create romantic moods, different seasons. The mountains, lakes, and forests were idealized, emphasizing metaphor over realism. Spatial depth was subordinated to flat planes of colour and pattern.[2]

[1] Myra Naito. Medium. Myra Naito. 2020. March 12

[2] By J.P. Losty, The Burlington magazine.vol.160/no.1387, 2017

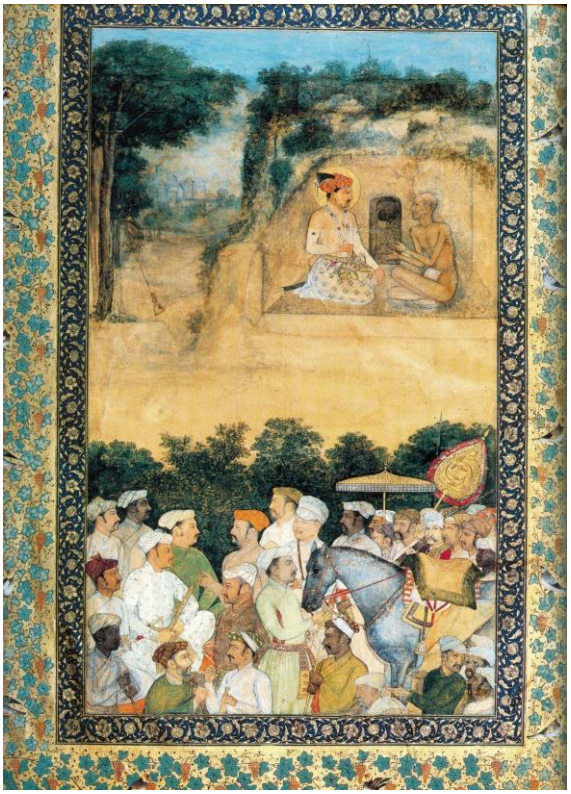

Figure 2: Govardhan Emperor Jahangir visiting the ascetic Jadrup, c. 1616–1620

Figure 3: Krishna lifts mount Govardhan by Ustad sahibdin, Bikaner c.1690. (Rajput painting)

Figure 4: Radha Krishna theme from Gita Govinda (Pahari style)

Colonial Period

With the arrival of British painters such as Thomas Daniell, William Hodges, and John Zoffany, India was visually reimagined as picturesque and the sublime. These artists, portrayed Indian landscapes with a sense of wonder, imposing perspective, and atmospheric realism. Their works depicted Indian monuments, rivers, and terrains as objects of observation, separated from their cultural and symbolic meanings.[3]

[3] Yale Centre for British Art. 2011, Oct.11

Figure 5: Ruins of the Naurattan, Sasaram, Bihar, 1811 (Thomas Daniell)

Figure 6: HMS Resolution and HMS Adventure in Matavai Bay, Tahiti

Indian artists under the Company School of Painting began imitating this European naturalism. While retaining elements of traditional Indian stylization, these works adopted Western techniques such as linear perspective, shading, and realistic anatomy. As art institutions in Madras, Kolkata, Mumbai and Lahore promoted academic training based on European models, Indian landscape painting became more technical and naturalistic.[4]

Figure 7: Khan Bahadur Khan with Men of his Clan, c. 1815, from the Fraser Album (Company Painting)

Early Twentieth Century and the Bengal School

Early twentieth century witnessed a cultural and artistic renaissance in India. The Bengal School, led by Abanindranath Tagore, responded to the domination of Western aesthetics by reclaiming indigenous traditions and emphasizing spiritual nationalism. Landscape art under this movement became symbolic, stylistic, and refined. Influenced by Japanese wash technique, Persian miniatures, and Mughal aesthetics, the Bengal School artists developed a new style that was lyrical and sophisticated.

[4] Beach, Milo Cleveland. *Mughal and Rajput Painting*, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Figure 8: Ganesh Janani (Abindranath Tagore)

Figure 9: Bharat Mata (Abindranath Tagore)

In Abanindranath's landscapes, such as *The Passing of Shah Jahan* or *Bharat Mata*, nature was no longer a setting — it became a character. Under the guidance of Rabindranath Tagore and the institutional vision of Santiniketan, artists like Nandalal Bose and Binod Bihari Mukherjee further evolved landscape as a pedagogical and experiential form of art. Painting outdoors, observing seasonal changes, and using local materials became part of the learning process.[5]

Figure 10: Mussorie - Landscape (Coolie), 1953 (Binod Bihari Mukherjee)

[5] Yungming Wong. Asta Guru Blog, 2024.Oct.18.

Figure 11: Landscape, 1959 (Nandalal Bose)

Post-Independence Modernism

After 1947, Indian artists embraced modernism as both a stylistic and ideological framework. Landscape painting became an expression of inner states, urban alienation, and spiritual quest. Ram Kumar, known for his early figurative work, transitioned to creating abstracted landscapes that reflect the melancholy of cities like Varanasi. S H Raza transformed landscape from early village scenes to later Bindu-centric composition. The landscape became a diagram of the cosmos, a visual mantra of creation and dissolution. This period also saw the rise of regional modernisms, where artists in Baroda, Madras, and Santiniketan developed unique visual languages incorporating local history, mythology, and geography.[6]

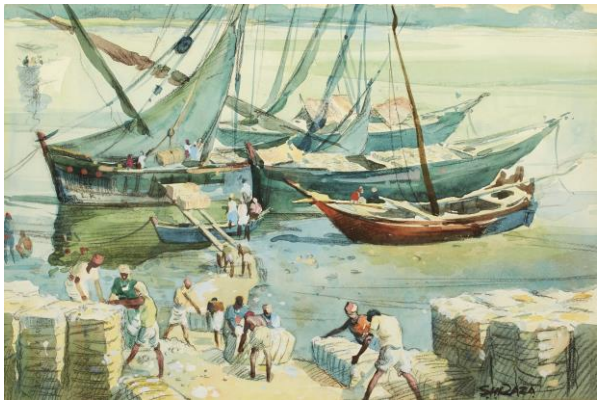

Figure12: Untitled, Sayed Haider Raza

Figure 13: Prakriti, 2010

Contemporary Period

Since 1990s, landscape in contemporary Indian art is no longer confined to painting. It has emerged as a site of critical inquiry intersecting with ecology, gender, memory, and politics.

[6] Davies, Philip. *Splendours of the Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660–1947*. John Murray, 1985.

Artists are now engaging with landscape through installation, photography, video, digital media, and performance art.

For example, Atul Bhalla examines urban water bodies and ecological degradation through photography and installation. Ravi Agarwal combines activism with art, using rivers and forests as contested terrains of development and sustainability. Sheba Chhachhi's installations address complex theme, blending image, text, and ritual.

Thus, landscape has become a dynamic field where aesthetics meets activism, and memory meets materiality.[7]

Figure 14: Yamuna Walks (Atul Bhalla)

Figure 15: Nadar Landscape (Ravi Agrawal)

Landscape art in India is a testament to the evolving relationship between artists and their environment — both external and internal. From symbolic backdrops in ancient frescoes to abstract meditations and ecological critiques in contemporary times, the genre has crossed vast conceptual and material terrains. Indian landscape artists have consistently redefined the genre not as static scenery but as an active site of emotion, politics, memory, and resistance.

[7] Kapur, Geeta. *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*. Tulika Books, 2000.

Through spiritual meditation, material experimentation, and global-local dialogue, landscape in Indian art continues to challenge and expand the boundaries of visual culture.

Chapter 2: Chandra Bhattacharjee – Landscapes of Transition

Figure 16: Chandra Bhattacharjee

Chandra Bhattacharjee (born 1961) is a well-known contemporary Indian artist, recognized for his calm and thoughtful style. He pursued his bachelors from the Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship, Kolkata, in 1986, and then completed his MFA from Kala Bhavan at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, in 1989.

His paintings are abstract and meditative, using simple forms and symbols to create a quiet, spiritual experience. His work often connects the physical world with deeper, spiritual ideas.

In his works, Chandra Bhattacharjee often depicts the village life and nature. He uses a technique called cross-hatching, where lines are layered to create depth and texture. His paintings are colorful but soft, blending the everyday with the spiritual.

Many of his works tell stories about human, animals, and other creatures living together. These scenes let viewers imagine their own stories. Unlike city life, which he finds chaotic, his paintings show a peaceful, dream-like world. He draws inspiration from the indigenous people, and his textures remind us of the mud walls of the rural cottages.[8]

[8] https://artalivegallery.com/artists/chandra-bhattacharjee.html

Figure 17 : Desire, Acrylic on canvas 36" x 40", 2005

This painting ‘Desire’ by Bhattacharjee (Figure 17) features a male figure, draped with a piece of cloth, stands facing an orange flower. Another hand appears from the left side of the composition, retching towards the flower. The presence of orange flower plays as an important element of landscape in this artwork. The background is very minimal, which is allowing the focus to the figure, the hand and a flower. Bhattacharjee used earthy tones and soft outlines.

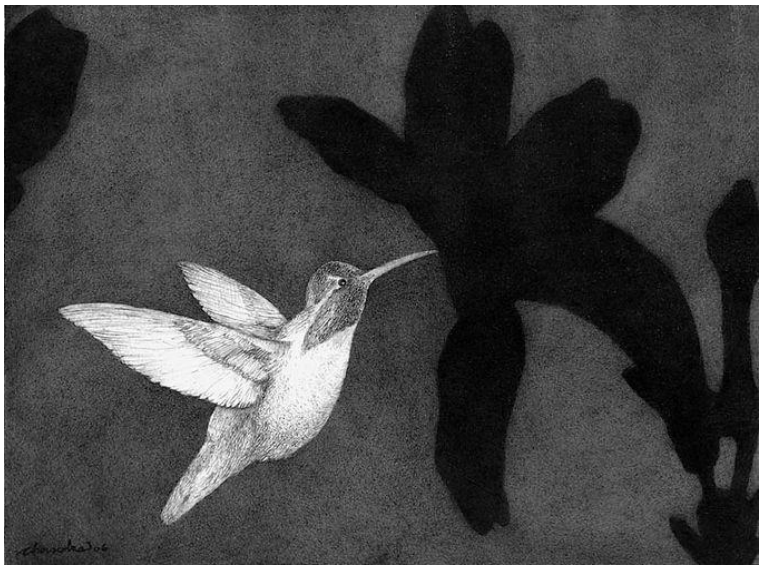

Figure 18: Humming Bird, Acrylic on Canvas, 36" x 42", 2006

This painting named ‘Humming Bird’ by Bhattacharjee (Figure 18) features a white humming bird flying towards a black flower. The bird, symbolizing freedom and grace, appears to be in search of sweet floral juice. Both the bird and the flower are key elements of

the landscape in this artwork. Both are placed thoughtfully in this artwork, enhancing its visual richness and natural charm.

Figure 19: Ferric Ooze, Acrylic on Canvas, 30 x 63.5 inches, 2007

The painting ‘Ferric Ooze’ by Bhattacharjee (Figure 19) is split into two sections, depicting a haunting human face. On the left, a large, dark flower and vibrant bend needle - like structure with rust has been depicted. On the right a face of a woman emerges from a texture surface, with small black marks and an arrow like object has been depicted. The flower on the left side serves as an important element of landscape. Bhattacharjee uses earthy tones in the artwork.

Figure 20: Untitled, Acrylic on paper, 8 1/2 × 12 1/2 inch, 2019

This artwork ‘Untitled’ by Chandra Bhattacharjee (Figure 20) portrays a male figure, bending down on his knees. There is a white smoke near the figure in white and grey tone. The

surface of the background is textured and dark, depicting an empty land. The vast empty land is an important element of the landscape which enhance the minimal quality of the landscape in this artwork. The kneeling posture depicts a mourning scene in an empty land.

Figure 21: Brihannala, Acrylic on Canvas, 72 × 48 inch, 2022

This painting ‘Brihannala’ (Figure 21) depicts the important scenes of Mahabharata, the moment when Arjuna assumes the identity of a dancer (Brihannala) during his final year of exile. The depiction the night sky portrays a significant atmospheric aspect in the landscape. This painting is done using acrylic on canvas depicting a figure which is neither masculine nor feminine. The figure in the painting seems holding an arrow in his hand. Bhattacharjee uses muted palette like grey, charcoal, black and white.

Figure 22: Untitled, Acrylic on Canvas, 60 x 44 inch, 2022

This painting ‘Untitled’ (Figure 22) depicts a calm and quiet scene with a single, empty chested figure standing on a dark, against a textured field. The figure is surrounded by several birds in white colors. The landscape is dreamlike with soft light and shadows. The smoke in the background is making the artwork both real and surreal. The artist used warm and earthy colors like browns, ochers, black and whites.

Figure 23: Untitled, Acrylic on Canvas, 60 x 36 inch, 2023

This painting, again ‘Untitled,’ (Figure 23) depicts a bird against the abstract and hazy background. He used muted browns and greys. It shows a white bird resting or sitting on the

branches surrounded by a shadowy background in a dense forest, which stands as a major natural aspect of the landscape.

Figure 24: Untitled, Acrylic on Canvas, 60 x 36 inch, 2023

This painting ‘Untitled’ (Figure 24) depicts a large reddish-brown tree, with branches and flowers. On the right side, there are a few white birds sitting among the branches. The warm color palette gives the painting a peaceful and glowing feel. The overall artwork features trees and a bird, which are a central part in landscape painting.

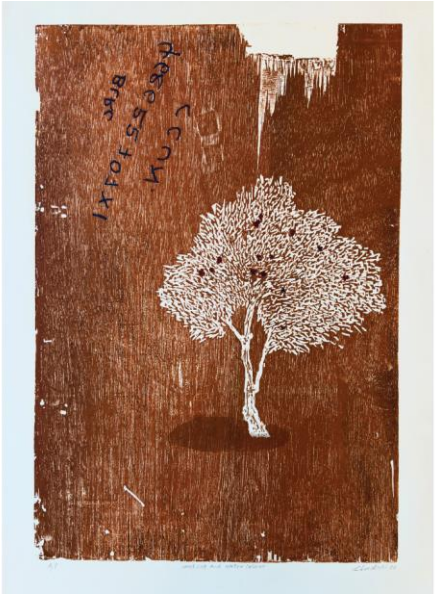

Figure 25: Untitled, Woodcut and Watercolor paint on paper, 29 1/2 × 21 1/2 inch, 2024

This artwork ‘Untitled’ by Chandra Bhattacharjee was created using woodcut and watercolor on paper. There is a single tree depicted at the center with detailed leaves. The background is textured with brown color. There are numbers or letters on the upper left part. This artwork qualifies as a landscape painting as it depicts the presence of nature.

Figure 26: Untitled, Charcoal and dry pastel on paper, 30 × 44 inch, 2024

This artwork ‘Untitled’ (Figure 26) depicts a tree with orange dots using grey, white and black shades. A tree is also shown with no leaves on it and on the other hand tree behind is shown lively. The background of this artwork has a very rough texture. The bare tree and dark tones suggest a winter or night time setting, common in landscape art to depict different times of a day or seasons.

As a whole, Chandra Bhattacharjee majorly depicts themes of rural tribal life, human-nature interaction, and landscapes by blending realism with abstraction, capturing rural and natural environment. His painting depicts ordinary details of rural life. He mostly works on acrylic, oil, watercolor, and mixed media. He paints the background in a minimalist way which creates the depth of the work.

Chapter 3: Indrapramit Roy – Layers of Nature

Figure 27: Indrapramit Roy

Indrapramit Roy (born 1964) is an Indian contemporary artist and educator. He completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking from Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan (1982 - 1987). He then pursued a Master of Fine Arts in Painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (1987-1989). In 1990, he received the well- known Inlaks Scholarship, which allowed him to study further at the Royal College of Art in London, where he earned another Master's degree in Painting (1990-1992).

Roy's artworks often depict urban landscapes and indoor scenes. He uses watercolor, acrylic, and mixed media in his paintings. His style combines abstract elements with storytelling, often reflecting on memory and lived experiences.

Along with making artworks, he also teaches at the Painting Department of Faculty of Fine Arts, MSU Baroda, where he has been guiding young artists for many years.[9]

Figure 28: Bedtime Stories, Mixed media on paper, 21.75 x 29.75 inch, 2003-2004

[9] Anil Relia. The Indian Portrait.

This painting ‘Bedtime Stories’ by Indrapramit Roy (Figure 28) shows a layered, wave like forms, representing a dream like landscape. The colors used are muted earthy tones – greys, browns, yellows and greens. A small golden circular form in the middle of the artwork has been depicted. He depicted small white marks in the overall artwork.

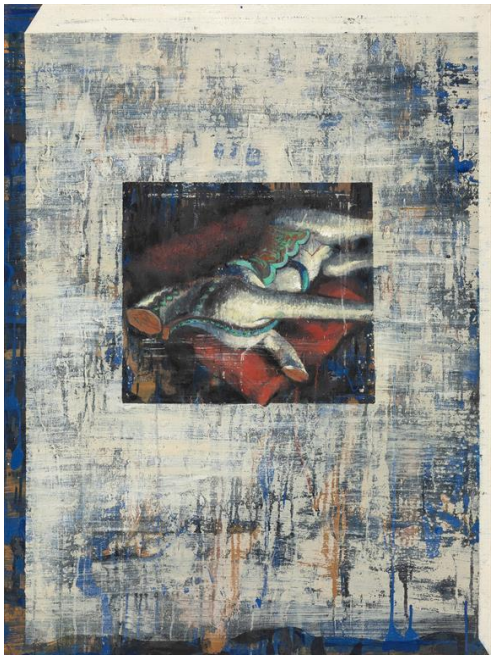

Figure 29: Unfinished Agenda, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 36 inch, 2004

This painting ‘Unfinished Agenda’ by Roy (Figure 29) is done in acrylic, using a mix of abstract patchwork and figures. At the center of the painting, there is a lifeless figure, possibly a headless horse, draped in a vibrant piece of cloth and lying down on a vibrant red piece of cloth. The horse here serves as a key element in landscape painting, symbolizing the part of fauna. The center of the artwork is done using dark colors in a more detailed way. The outer area or the background of the artwork is done with rough brushstrokes using blue, white, grey and yellow.

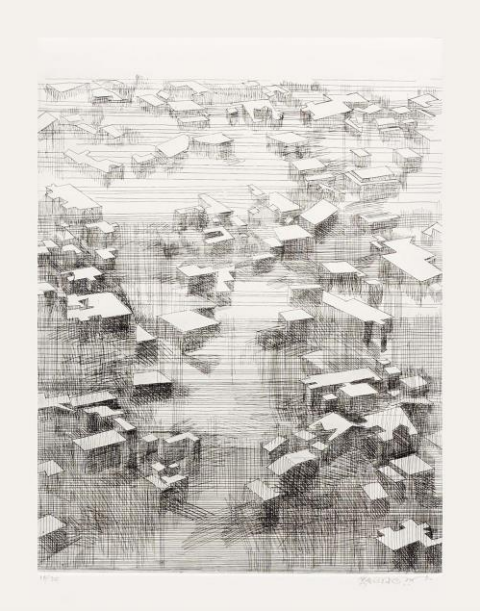

Figure 30: LR in Bengali, Etching on Paper, 26 x 19.5 inch, 2005

This etching ‘LR in Bengali’ by Roy (Figure 30) appears to show a top-down view of an urban settlement. Buildings are represented as geometrics blocks, tightly packed together. The use of black and white showcases texture and shadow. This artwork is done in cross-hatching with fine lines. This artwork can be seen as a form of urban landscape art, portraying a built environment.

Figure 31: Deep Dusk II, watercolour on paper, 101.6 x 152.4 cm, 2007

This artwork ‘Deep Dusk II’ by Roy (Figure 31) is in watercolor on paper which depicts a bad conditioned building with cracks on the walls and broken windows. The building seems to be vacant for a long period of time. The sky is depicted in dark color of grey and blue with a mixture of yellow-orange color. Just behind the vacant building there are possible many

vacant buildings painted in dark color and the yellow orange light evokes the last moments of daylight after the sunsets. The overall setting of this painting depict an urban landscape.

Figure 32: Rear Window, watercolour on paper, 152.4 x 101.6 cm, 2007

This painting ‘Rear Window’ by Roy (Figure 32) is done in watercolour on paper depicting the rectangular window frames on a dark building. Each window frames glows in shades of yellow and orange colour. The curtains a table a door a toilet, ceilings and stairs are possible painted inside the windows. This artworks captures the essence of urban landscape through the view of bright windows.

Figure 33: Untitled, Watercolour on paper, 39 x 25.5 inch, 2012

This painting ‘Untitled’ done in watercolor (Figure 33) on paper depicts a tree in the foreground at the center of the composition with detailed leaves and branches. Behind the tree, architectural elements are creating a shadow. Inside we could see a modern building interior showcasing staircase, doorways, and windows in yellow and blue. Roy used mostly yellow, blue, grey and black colors in this composition. The existence of the tree with the architectural frame reflects the urban spaces interrupted by elements of natural world.

Figure 34: Imaginary Homeland, Watercolor on paper, 42 × 29 ½ × ½ inch, 2020

This painting ‘Imaginary Homeland’ (Figure 34) is done in watercolor on paper depicting a glowing reflection of light in yellow, gold and white color on water in a dark, deep background. At the top left there is a piece of a blur page which features the small plant with leaves and text written on it which is overlapping the artwork. Beneath the painting there is a caption written – “Lately, it occurs to me what a long strange trip it’s been.” Possibly Roy depicted a scene imagining from his trip to homeland. This painting is an overall setting of a natural landscape depicting water and a small plant, possibly a scene of night.

Figure 35: Innocence, Etching, 15 1/2 × 18 1/2 inch, 2022

This work named ‘Innocence’ (Figure 35) is an etching on paper depicting a small boat in dark black color. Above the boat there is a smoke like clouds in the sky field with strokes with birds in black color flying across the clouds. Beneath the work there is power full caption – “He was innocent of history, his innocence assured his complicity.” This painting features the characteristics of landscape, capturing the essence of the environment.

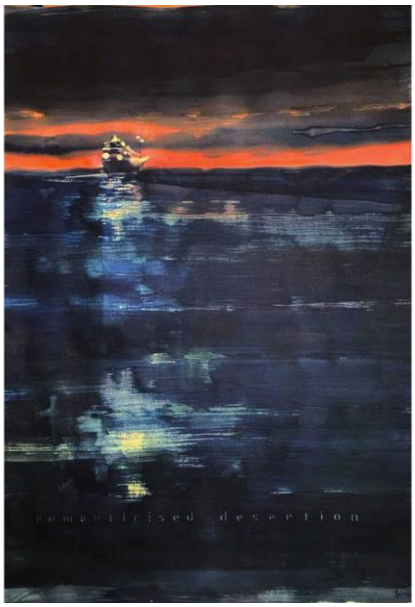

Figure 36: Untitled, Watercolor on paper, 44 × 30 inch , 2024

This painting ‘Untitled’ (Figure 36) depicts the sky, the sea, and the boat. The sky is painted in deep orange and yellow creating a sunset or sunrise like effect. The sea is depicted like most of his other compositions in deep blue and black with strokes of white yellow and light grey creating the reflection of light and shadow. The boat appears in the distance – small and

glowing effect. The overall setting is a landscape painting depicting a scenery of sunrise or maybe a sunset.

Figure 37: Metropolis I, Watercolours on Golden Acrylic base on paper, 30" x 40"inch

This painting 'Metropolis I' by Roy (Figure 37) is done using watercolours over a golden acrylic base. It depicts the buildings roads, and cities that are glowing in a golden yellow light. The golden acrylic base gives the work a glowing effect. Tall buildings have been depicted reflecting a rapid urbanization, portraying the scene of urban landscapes in the night time. There is a tall building which dominates the middle of the composition.[10]

As a whole, the works of Indrapramit Roy often depict his figurative and narrative painting style. His works blends with realism and dream-like atmosphere, depicting themes of urban life, memory and emotions. He uses earthy, muted tones which creates a sense of calmness. He mostly works in oil on canvas but uses mixed-media, with adding layers and textures. He often added texts on his painting which tells stories of personal and sometimes social.

[10] This review was published in Art India: The Art News magazine of India (Vol XVI, Issue 1, Quarter 1, 2009). Posted by Trisha Gupta.

Chapter 4: Comparative Analysis between the Landscape Paintings by Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy

A comparative analysis between the landscape paintings of Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy, based on their works, styles, themes, materials and mediums are as follows:

- Indrapramit Roy and Chandra Bhattacharjee, both use landscape as an important element in their work.
- Both of their artworks often have a calm, quiet and meditative feeling.
- Both the artist uses layers and textures to add depth to their works.
- They often depict the relationship between people and nature but in their own style.
- Both of them use soft, earthy and muted colors instead of bright colors which add emotional tone to their work.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee's style is realistic with a calm and dream like feel, whereas Indrapramit Roy mixes abstraction and figures which is not always realistic.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee often focuses on village life, nature and daily life moments whereas Indrapramit Roy deals with memory, time and travel.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee's work often depicts the silent and emotional stories of rural India whereas Indrapramit Roy uses symbols and metaphors instead of conveying direct stories.
- Chandra Bhattacharhjee's landscapes are more real-looking and detailed which depict actual places or scenes of rural life, whereas Indrapramit's landscapes are often abstract or symbolic that portrays inner feelings or memories.
- Bhattcharejee's are mostly in oil and acrylic on canvas and he uses palette knife and scratching tools for textures, whereas Roy uses tempera, gouache, watercolor and handmade papers.

Conclusion

Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy, both being contemporary Indian artists, showcase different yet important contributions to modern Indian art through their unique style and themes.

Chandra Bhattacharjee's paintings are realistic with little dream like image, which often focuses on rural life and the human conditions. He uses various mediums like acrylic on canvas, charcoal and mix median on paper which allows him to achieve smooth transitions and dream like atmosphere. Sometimes he also includes the use of dry pastels for textured surface. His work blends realism with symbolism using muted earthy colors. His use of acrylic helps to create soft and grainy textures. On the other hand, Indrapramit Roy's works often explore memory, time and identity through texture surface. He uses mediums like oil on canvas, tempera and mix media, graphite and ink on paper which allows him to create depth to the atmospheric and figurative works. He also uses fabrics to achieve layered textures. Roy is known for his poetic abstraction and emotive figures. He blends traditional oil techniques with modern themes between memory and human experience.

Together, both these artists offer a contemporary Indian visual language engaging traditional aesthetics with modern aesthetics. Both of them depict landscape on different perspectives that how landscapes can be more than just a place – a space of memory, emotion and quiet storytelling. Their works highlight the power of visual art to express both external realities and internal journey.

Both these artists work differently in their own style contributing an important role in Contemporary Indian Art. They blend elements of urban and rural life using their chosen mediums to create depth in their works. Their practices reflect a deep engagement with materials, allowing the medium itself to play a narrative role in the expression of their works. They both have played a key role in Indian Contemporary Art, creating a bridge between tradition and modernity through different materials and emotions.

List of Figures/Plates

Figure 1: Bodhisattva Padmapani (Ajanta Cave no.1)

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Photo Credit

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REPORT OF THE PLAGIARISM CHECK

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DEPICTION OF LANDSCAPE IN THE WORKS OF CHANDRA BHATTACHARJEE AND INDRAPRAMIT ROY

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Landscape art is a silent but powerful form of visual narration. It plays a critical role in shaping how we understand the connection between human emotion with nature, environment, and identity. In the Indian context, landscape art has experienced a remarkable journey, from a mere backdrop in early paintings to becoming a profound expression in contemporary art. Visual art in this country prioritized the spiritual and the figural over naturalistic representation of space. Yet, through colonial interventions, cultural revivals, and modernist transformations, Indian landscape art has evolved into a complex field of study.

Ancient and Medieval Periods

In the ancient Indian tradition, landscapes did not exist as independent genres. Instead, nature appeared as a decorative, symbolic, or narrative element supporting mythological or religious themes. For instance, the frescoes in Ajanta caves illustrate forests, rivers, and gardens — but always in relation to the Jataka tales or scenes from the Buddha's life. Trees symbolize enlightenment or shelter, rivers represent transitions, and flora conveys abundance.

In miniature painting traditions of Mughal, Rajput and Pahari schools, nature became more detailed but remained secondary to human figures and divine action. Rajput and Pahari miniature paintings depict landscapes to create romantic moods, different seasons. The mountains, lakes, and forests were idealized, emphasizing metaphor over realism. Spatial depth was subordinated to flat planes of colour and pattern.

Colonial Period

With the arrival of British painters such as Thomas Daniell, William Hodges, and John Zoffany, India was visually reimagined as picturesque and the sublime. These artists, portrayed Indian landscapes with a sense of wonder, imposing perspective, and atmospheric realism. Their works depicted Indian monuments, rivers, and terrains as objects of observation, separated from their cultural and symbolic meanings.

Indian artists under the Company School of Painting began imitating this European naturalism. While retaining elements of traditional Indian stylization, these works adopted Western techniques such as linear perspective, shading, and realistic anatomy. As art institutions in Madras, Kolkata, Mumbai and Lahore promoted academic training based on European models, Indian landscape painting became more technical and naturalistic.

Early Twentieth Century and the Bengal School

Early twentieth century witnessed a cultural and artistic renaissance in India. The Bengal School, led by Abanindranath Tagore, responded to the domination of Western aesthetics by reclaiming indigenous traditions and emphasizing spiritual nationalism. Landscape art under this movement became symbolic, stylistic, and refined. Influenced by Japanese wash technique, Persian miniatures, and Mughal aesthetics, the Bengal School artists developed a new style that was lyrical and sophisticated.

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In Abanindranath's landscapes, such as The Passing of Shah Jahan or Bharat Mata, nature was no longer a setting — it became a character. Under the guidance of Rabindranath Tagore and the institutional vision of Santiniketan, artists like Nandalal Bose and Binod Bihari Mukherjee further evolved landscape as a pedagogical and experiential form of art. Painting outdoors, observing seasonal changes, and using local materials became part of the learning process.

Post-Independence Modernism

After 1947, Indian artists embraced modernism as both a stylistic and ideological framework. Landscape painting became an expression of inner states, urban alienation, and spiritual quest. Ram Kumar, known for his early figurative work, transitioned to creating abstracted landscapes that reflect the melancholy of cities like Varanasi. S H Raza transformed landscape from early village scenes to later Bindu-centric composition. The landscape became a diagram of the cosmos, a visual mantra of creation and dissolution. This period also saw the rise of regional modernisms, where artists in Baroda, Madras, and Santiniketan developed unique visual languages incorporating local history, mythology, and geography.

Contemporary Period

Since 1990s, landscape in contemporary Indian art is no longer confined to painting. It has emerged as a site of critical inquiry intersecting with ecology, gender, memory, and politics. Artists are now engaging with landscape through installation, photography, video, digital media, and performance art.

For example, Atul Bhalla examines urban water bodies and ecological degradation through photography and installation. Ravi Agarwal combines activism with art, using rivers and forests as contested terrains of

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Words	911
Characters	5576
Sentences	60
Paragraphs	15
Read Time	5 minute(s)
Speak Time	7 minute(s)

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Chandra Bhattacharjee (born 1961) is a well-known contemporary Indian artist, recognized for his calm and thoughtful style. He pursued his bachelors from the Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship, Kolkata, in 1986, and then completed his MFA from Kala Bhavan at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, in 1989.
His paintings are abstract and meditative, using simple forms and symbols to create a quiet, spiritual experience. His work often connects the physical world with deeper, spiritual ideas.
In his works, Chandra Bhattacharjee often depicts the village life and nature. He uses a technique called cross-hatching, where lines are layered to create depth and texture. His paintings are colorful but soft, blending the everyday with the spiritual.
Many of his works tell stories about human, animals, and other creatures living together. These scenes let viewers imagine their own stories. Unlike city life, which he finds chaotic, his paintings show a peaceful, dream-like world. He draws inspiration from the indigenous people, and his textures remind us of the mud walls of the rural cottages.

This painting 'Desire' by Bhattacharjee (Figure 17) features a male figure, draped with a piece of cloth, stands facing an orange flower. Another hand appears from the left side of the composition, retching towards the flower. The presence of orange flower plays as an important element of landscape in this artwork. The background is very minimal, which is allowing the focus to the figure, the hand and a flower. Bhattacharjee used earthy tones and soft outlines.

This painting named 'Humming Bird' by Bhattacharjee (Figure 18) features a white humming bird flying towards a black flower. The bird, symbolizing freedom and grace, appears to be in search of sweet floral juice. Both the bird and the flower are key elements of the landscape in this artwork. Both are placed thoughtfully in this artwork, enhancing its visual richness and natural charm.

The painting 'Ferric Ooze' by Bhattacharjee (Figure 19) is split into two sections, depicting a haunting human face. On the left, a large, dark flower and vibrant bend needle - like structure with rust has been depicted. On the right a face of a woman emerges from a texture surface, with small black marks and an arrow like object has been depicted. The flower on the left side serves as an important element of landscape. Bhattacharjee uses earthy tones in the artwork.

This artwork 'Untitled' by Chandra Bhattacharjee (Figure 20) portrays a male figure, bending down on his knees. There is a white smoke near the figure in white and grey tone. The surface of the background is textured and dark, depicting an empty land. The vast empty land is an important element of the landscape which enhance the minimal quality of the landscape in this artwork. The kneeling posture depicts a mourning scene in an empty land.

This painting 'Brihannala' (Figure 21) depicts the important scenes of Mahabharata, the moment when Arjuna

assumes the identity of a dancer (Brihannala) during his final year of exile. The depiction the night sky portrays a significant atmospheric aspect in the landscape. This painting is done using acrylic on canvas depicting a figure which is neither masculine nor feminine. The figure in the painting seems holding an arrow in his hand. Bhattacharjee uses muted palette like grey, charcoal, black and white.

This painting 'Untitled' (Figure 22) depicts a calm and quiet scene with a single, empty chested figure standing on a dark, against a textured field. The figure is surrounded by several birds in white colors. The landscape is dreamlike with soft light and shadows. The smoke in the background is making the artwork both real and surreal. The artist used warm and earthy colors like browns, ochers, black and whites.

This painting, again 'Untitled,' (Figure 23) depicts a bird against the abstract and hazy background. He used muted browns and greys. It shows a white bird resting or sitting on the branches surrounded by a shadowy background in a dense forest, which stands as a major natural aspect of the landscape.

This painting 'Untitled' (Figure 24) depicts a large reddish-brown tree, with branches and flowers. On the right side, there are a few white birds sitting among the branches. The warm color palette gives the painting a peaceful and glowing feel. The overall artwork features trees and a bird, which are a central part in landscape painting.

This artwork 'Untitled' by Chandra Bhattacharjee was created using woodcut and watercolor on paper. There is a single tree depicted at the center with detailed leaves. The background is textured with brown color. There are numbers or letters on the upper left part. This artwork qualifies as a landscape painting as it

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Words	957
Characters	5702
Sentences	55
Paragraphs	13
Read Time	5 minute(s)
Speak Time	7 minute(s)

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Indrapramit Roy (born 1964) is an Indian contemporary artist and educator. He completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking from Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan (1982 - 1987). He then pursued a Master of Fine Arts in Painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (1987-1989). In 1990, he received the well- known Inlaks Scholarship, which allowed him to study further at the Royal College of Art in London, where he earned another Master's degree in Painting (1990-1992).
Roy's artworks often depict urban landscapes and indoor scenes. He uses watercolor, acrylic, and mixed media in his paintings. His style combines abstract elements with storytelling, often reflecting on memory and lived experiences.
Along with making artworks, he also teaches at the Painting Department of Faculty of Fine Arts, MSU Baroda, where he has been guiding young artists for many years.

This painting 'Bedtime Stories' by Indrapramit Roy (Figure 28) shows a layered, wave like forms, representing a dream like landscape. The colors used are muted earthy tones – greys, browns, yellows and greens. A small golden circular form in the middle of the artwork has been depicted. He depicted small white marks in the overall artwork.

This painting 'Unfinished Agenda' by Roy (Figure 29) is done in acrylic, using a mix of abstract patchwork and figures. At the center of the painting, there is a lifeless figure, possibly a headless horse, draped in a vibrant piece of cloth and lying down on a vibrant red piece of cloth. The horse here serves as a key element in landscape painting, symbolizing the part of fauna. The center of the artwork is done using dark colors in a more detailed way. The outer area or the background of the artwork is done with rough brushstrokes using blue, white, grey and yellow.

This etching 'LR in Bengali' by Roy (Figure 30) appears to show a top-down view of an urban settlement. Buildings are represented as geometrics blocks, tightly packed together. The use of black and white showcases texture and shadow. This artwork is done in cross-hatching with fine lines. This artwork can be seen as a form of urban landscape art, portraying a built environment.

This artwork 'Deep Dusk II' by Roy (Figure 31) is in watercolor on paper which depicts a bad conditioned building with cracks on the walls and broken windows. The building seems to be vacant for a long period of time. The sky is depicted in dark color of grey and blue with a mixture of yellow-orange color. Just behind the vacant building there are possible many vacant buildings painted in dark color and the yellow orange light evokes the last moments of daylight after the sunsets. The overall setting of this painting depict an urban landscape.

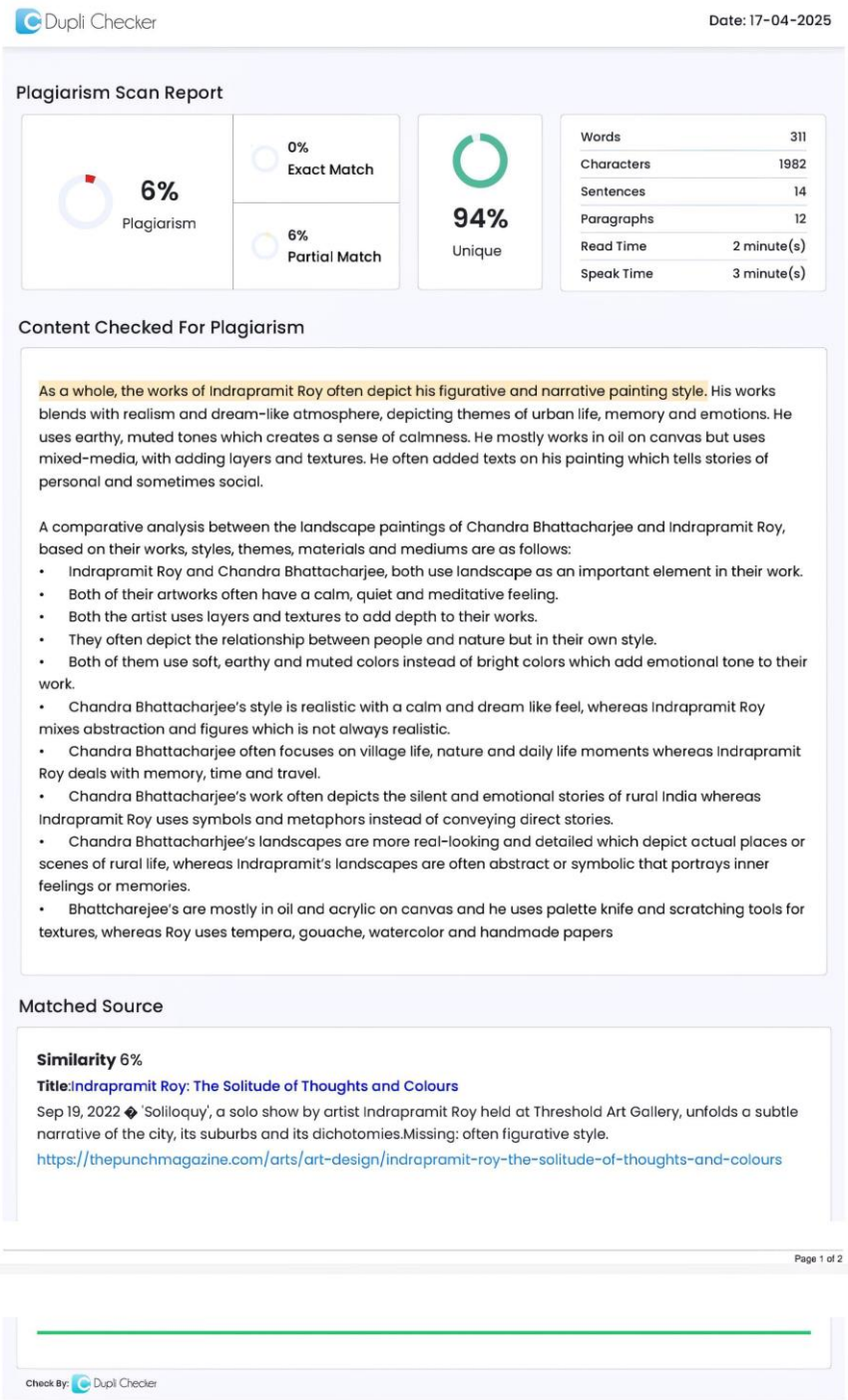
This painting 'Rear Window' by Roy (Figure 32) is done in watercolour on paper depicting the rectangular window frames on a dark building. Each window frames glows in shades of yellow and orange colour. The

curtains a table a door a toilet, ceilings and stairs are possible painted inside the windows. This artworks captures the essence of urban landscape through the view of bright windows.

This painting 'Untitled' done in watercolor (Figure 33) on paper depicts a tree in the foreground at the center of the composition with detailed leaves and branches. Behind the tree, architectural elements are creating a shadow. Inside we could see a modern building interior showcasing staircase, doorways, and windows in yellow and blue. Roy used mostly yellow, blue, grey and black colors in this composition. The existence of the tree with the architectural frame reflects the urban spaces interrupted by elements of natural world.

This painting 'Imaginary Homeland' (Figure 34) is done in watercolor on paper depicting a glowing reflection of light in yellow, gold and white color on water in a dark, deep background. At the top left there is a piece of a blur page which features the small plant with leaves and text written on it which is overlapping the artwork. Beneath the painting there is a caption written – "Lately, it occurs to me what a long strange trip it's been." Possibly Roy depicted a scene imagining from his trip to homeland. This painting is an overall setting of a natural landscape depicting water and a small plant, possibly a scene of night.

This work named 'Innocence' (Figure 35) is an etching on paper depicting a small boat in dark black color. Above the boat there is a smoke like clouds in the sky field with strokes with birds in black color flying across the clouds. Beneath the work there is power full caption – "He was innocent of history, his innocence assured his complicity." This painting features the characteristics of landscape, capturing the essence of the environment.



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Words	311
Characters	1982
Sentences	14
Paragraphs	12
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As a whole, the works of Indrapramit Roy often depict his figurative and narrative painting style. His works blends with realism and dream-like atmosphere, depicting themes of urban life, memory and emotions. He uses earthy, muted tones which creates a sense of calmness. He mostly works in oil on canvas but uses mixed-media, with adding layers and textures. He often added texts on his painting which tells stories of personal and sometimes social.

A comparative analysis between the landscape paintings of Chandra Bhattacharjee and Indrapramit Roy, based on their works, styles, themes, materials and mediums are as follows:

- Indrapramit Roy and Chandra Bhattacharjee, both use landscape as an important element in their work.
- Both of their artworks often have a calm, quiet and meditative feeling.
- Both the artist uses layers and textures to add depth to their works.
- They often depict the relationship between people and nature but in their own style.
- Both of them use soft, earthy and muted colors instead of bright colors which add emotional tone to their work.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee's style is realistic with a calm and dream like feel, whereas Indrapramit Roy mixes abstraction and figures which is not always realistic.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee often focuses on village life, nature and daily life moments whereas Indrapramit Roy deals with memory, time and travel.
- Chandra Bhattacharjee's work often depicts the silent and emotional stories of rural India whereas Indrapramit Roy uses symbols and metaphors instead of conveying direct stories.
- Chandra Bhattacharhjee's landscapes are more real-looking and detailed which depict actual places or scenes of rural life, whereas Indrapramit's landscapes are often abstract or symbolic that portrays inner feelings or memories.
- Bhattcharejee's are mostly in oil and acrylic on canvas and he uses palette knife and scratching tools for textures, whereas Roy uses tempera, gouache, watercolor and handmade papers

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Sep 19, 2022 • 'Soliloquy', a solo show by artist Indrapramit Roy held at Threshold Art Gallery, unfolds a subtle narrative of the city, its suburbs and its dichotomies.Missing: often figurative style.

https://thepunchmagazine.com/arts/art-design/indrapramit-roy-the-solitude-of-thoughts-and-colours

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